

# EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

## TRIBUTE TO STATE SENATOR NORMA ANDERSON

### HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 31, 2006*

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I occasionally use this forum to acknowledge the contributions my fellow Coloradans make on behalf of Colorado and our country. Today, I rise to commend the service of just such a person, my former colleague, State Senator Norma Anderson.

Last month, Senator Anderson announced her retirement from the Colorado State Senate after nearly 20 years of uninterrupted service as a legislator. Both Democrats and Republicans lauded her record, and I wanted to lend my name to her long list of unabashed admirers. While we have served in different political parties and held separate offices in the public arena, I have always admired Norma Anderson's direct and honest approach to public service. She is the kind of person who speaks her mind, knows the rules, respects the needs of her constituents and above all, she is the kind of leader who is not afraid to let the chips fall after making a decision. Norma has never suffered fools and she is not one to be intimidated. In my brief service in the Colorado General Assembly I came to deeply respect her judgment; I appreciated her way of dealing with colleagues, and I still consider her a friend.

A respected Denver Post columnist, Diane Carman, has called her "an old-fashioned Republican with a sharp tongue, impeccable taste and a stubborn independent streak." I don't believe I can improve on this description of Norma except to add that she has always struck me as a formidable and principled woman, and her record of accomplishment and service to Colorado has few equals.

[From the Denver Post, Jan. 4, 1906]

SENATOR WIELDED GRACE, INDEPENDENCE  
(By Diane Carman)

She's an old-fashioned Republican with a sharp tongue, impeccable taste and a stubborn independent streak.

In a lot of ways, that explains it all.

Norma Anderson retired Tuesday after 19 years in the Colorado legislature, saying only, "It's the right thing for me at this time."

She's not sick, the vibrant 73-year-old said. She's not angry or frustrated or bored. She's simply finished.

The fact that a successor to her Senate seat will be appointed under a Republican governor and will have the edge of incumbency in the next election surely must have crossed her mind, though, as well as the inescapable reality that with the Republicans in the minority again this session, she wouldn't be wielding any gavels in the last months of her term-limited legislative career.

Still, she exited gracefully with a subtle nod to partisan interests, a private party for her supporters and a firm commitment to personal priorities.

No news conferences with TV cameras trained on her face. No razzmatazz.

It was pure Norma, her ego in check.

Many times over the years, she has been on the short lists to run for the U.S. Congress, for governor or for other statewide offices. She never caught the fever.

"At one time I was thinking about secretary of state. I sat down with Donetta Davidson: We talked a little bit, and I just said, 'You do it, Donetta.'"

Being a state legislator was enough, she said, "I never had any desire to do anything else."

Not that it's been all bill-signing galas and warm accolades.

Anderson is known for her ability to irritate her fellow lawmakers, maybe especially those in her own party.

In the 1990s, when Colorado Republicans started leaning decidedly far to the right, Anderson remained a moderate—and a sometimes exasperating one at that.

In one memorable stand against the party juggernaut, she voted against a bill to outlaw same-sex marriage. In another, she opposed a bill to require students to say the Pledge of Allegiance in schools.

She wasn't being obstinate, she said, she just didn't believe the government should be messing around in people's personal lives or requiring people to repeat pledges. She'd done her homework, she said, and it didn't seem right.

She accepts credit for marshaling support for dozens of bills over the years, for establishing the state departments of transportation and human services, and for breaking untold barriers that kept women out of legislative leadership positions for decades.

There are a few episodes she doesn't recall fondly, however, and one of them was the infamous midnight gerrymander.

Anderson played a crucial role in slamming through the Republican redistricting scheme in the last three days of the 2003 legislative session, though she was clearly ambivalent about it.

Sure, her expertise with Senate rules and circumventing them was critical to passage of the last minute bills, and she presided over most of the chaotic sessions. But she was not happy about it.

In the midst of the nasty political uproar, she even declined to return a call from Bush adviser Karl Rove, who was either the mastermind of the ham-handed strategy or simply an interested observer, depending on whose spin you believe.

That may have been her proudest moment in the whole mess.

"It was pretty common knowledge that I had concerns," Anderson told me back then, "but I was elected to lead my caucus, and that's what I did."

Months later, when the state Supreme Court threw out the redistricting plan and the U.S. Supreme Court refused to hear the Republicans' appeal, she didn't join the party bigs in fulminating about judicial overreach and legislating from the bench. She kept quiet.

She respected the process. She believed in the democratic system. And if some folks think that's being stubbornly independent, she's OK with that.

In a lot of ways, that explains it all.

## RECOGNIZING THE OUTSTANDING EFFORTS OF DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

### HON. C.A. DUTCH RUPPERSBERGER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 31, 2006*

Mr. RUPPERSBERGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the life and the contributions of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and to mark the 77th anniversary of his birth on January 15, 1929.

History is indeed made up of significant events which shape our future and outstanding leaders who influence our destiny. Martin Luther King, Jr. has had numerous historic moments in the struggle for civil rights that have been used to identify him—prime mover of the Montgomery bus boycott, keynote speaker at the March on Washington, youngest Nobel Peace Prize laureate.

But in retrospect, Mr. Speaker the single events are less important than the fact that King, and his policy of nonviolent protest, was the dominant force in the civil rights movement during its decade of greatest achievement, from 1957 to 1968.

Born on January 15, 1929, a son was born to the Reverend and Mrs. Martin Luther King in an upstairs bedroom of 501 Auburn Avenue, in Atlanta, GA. The couple named their first son after Rev. King, but he was simply called "M.L." by the family.

Mr. Speaker, during the next 12 years, this fine two story Victorian home is where M.L. would live with his parents, grandparents, siblings, aunts, uncles, and their boarders. It was in these surroundings of home, church and neighborhood that M.L. experienced his childhood. Here, M.L. learned about family and Christian love, segregation in the days of "Jim Crow" laws, diligence and tolerance.

Mr. Speaker, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was undoubtedly a vital figure of the modern era. His lectures and dialogues stirred the concern and sparked the conscience of a generation. The movements and marches he led brought significant changes in the fabric of American life through his courage and selfless devotion. His charismatic leadership inspired men and women, young and old, in this Nation and around the world.

Dr. King's concept of "somebodiness," which symbolized the celebration of human worth and the conquest of subjugation, gave African-Americans and all people hope and a sense of dignity.

The Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday celebrates the life and legacy of a man who brought hope and healing to America. We commemorate as well the timeless values he taught us through his example—the values of courage, truth, justice, compassion, dignity, humility and service that so radiantly defined Dr. King's character and empowered his leadership. On this holiday, we commemorate the universal, unconditional love, forgiveness and nonviolence that empowered his revolutionary spirit.

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